

Message Text

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16

ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6008

INFO AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

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FROM ROCAP

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: ECONOMIC MINISTERS FOCUS ON EXPORT PROMOTION

REF: GUATEMALA 1096

1. AMONG THE MATTERS DISCUSSED BY THE CENTRAL AMERICAN MINISTERS OF ECONOMY DURING THEIR MEETING IN GUATEMALA FEBRUARY 21-22 WAS THE QUESTION OF EXPORT PROMOTION.

2. THE MINISTERS, INTER ALIA, DECIDED TO A) ELIMINATE THE SEPARATE IDENTITY OF THE REGIONAL EXPORT PROMOTION INSTITUTE (PROMECA), AND B) ORDER AN INDEPENDENT STUDY OF ALL EXPORT PROMOTION ACTIVITIES, BOTH REGIONAL AND NATIONAL, THROUGHOUT THE AREA.

3. SIECA GAVE IMMEDIATE EFFECT TO THE TRANSFORMATION OF PROMECA BY CHANGING ITS NAME TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EXPORT DEVELOPMENT, THUS CLARIFYING ITS STATUS AS A DIVISION OF THE CA INTEGRATION

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SECRETARIAT AND NOT A SEPARATE INTEGRATION INSTITUTE. COMMENT:

THIS ACTION APPEARS DESIGNED TO STABILIZE THE REGIONAL EXPORT PROMOTION AGENCY UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THE PROPOSED OVERALL STUDY IS COMPLETED. PROMECA HAS BEEN THE SUBJECT OF HARSH CRITICISM BY SOME NATIONAL EXPORT PROMOTION AGENCIES, WITH WHICH IT HAS NEVER DEVELOPED HARMONIOUS WORKING RELATIONSHIPS. SINCE IT IS NOW VISIBLY WITHIN SIECA, AND THEREFORE VISIBLY ALSO UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE ECONOMIC MINISTERS, THE REGIONAL EXPORT DEVELOPMENT AGENCY MAY BE LESS VULNERABLE TO UNDERCUTTING BY NATIONAL AGENCIES. ALSO, PROMECA HAS BEEN AFFLICTED BY DAMAGING INTERNAL DISCORD. CLOSER SIECA CONTROL COULD RESULT IN A PERSONNEL SHAKEOUT.

4. THE ANALYSIS ORDERED BY THE MINECONS IS TO BE PERFORMED BY AN INDEPENDENT COMMITTEE. ALTHOUGH NOT YET DESIGNATED, THE COMMITTEE WILL REPORTEDLY INCLUDE REPRESENTATIVES OF BOTH PRIVATE AND PUBLIC SECTORS IN THE FIVE CA'S. THE STUDY WILL NOT REPEAT NOT BE PERFORMED BY THE NATIONAL EXPORT INSTITUTES, WHICH WILL THEMSELVES BE ANALYZED. AMONG THE OTHER ENTITIES SUBJECTED TO ANALYSIS WILL BE CABEI AND THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT BANKS, WITH RESPECT TO THEIR EXPORT-PROMOTION ORIENTED PROJECTS. THE ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONCERTED CA EXPORT PROMOTION EFFORTS ARE TO BE COMPLETED BY END APRIL. (COMMENT: A CAREFUL LOOK AT EXPORT STATISTICS, AS WELL IDENTIFICATION AND CLASSIFICATION OF EXPORTERS, COULD HELP TO IMPROVE PROMOTIONAL EFFORTS AND REDUCE INEFFICIENT FRICTIONS. AT THE SAME TIME, IT COULD ALSO FACILIATATE OVERALL EXPORT EXPANSION, AS WELL AS (POSSIBLY) THE SELECTIVE LIMITATION OF EXPORTS). PARKER ALSO PASSED INFO USAID/GUATEMALA. ANDREWS

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